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What Intelligent Men of the World Say of Missions

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SINCE the Boxer movement in China has attracted the attention of the world to that country and given occasion for another attack on the work of missions by a considerable number of secular papers, it has occurred to me that it might be instructive to learn what those persons have to say who have the best opportunity to know of the great world-movements now in progress, and whose opportunities for observing Christian missions have arisen from commercial or State occupations. As will be seen on examination, I have not admitted anything from missionaries nor from preachers, nor from any one in any direct way connected with missions.

The estimates of these pages are those of such statesmen as we elect to the Presidency of our great Republic; to such also as we appoint to the most responsible posts of diplomatic service, besides scholars, naval officers, foreign statesmen, governors, heathen statesmen, philosophers, princes, editors, and even kings. The opinions of such men cannot be "whistled down the wind." They go far toward settling the question as to whether Christian missions do good.

Ex-President Benjamin F. Harrison says mission work "is the most influential and enduring work that is being done in this day of great enterprises."

President William McKinley says: "The story of Christian missions is one of thrilling interest and marvelous results. The sacrifices of the missionaries for their fellowmen constitute one of the most glorious pages of the world's history. The missionary, of whatever Church or ecclesiastical body, who devotes his life to the service of the Master and of man, carrying the torch of truth and enlightenment, deserves the gratitude and homage of mankind. . . . They have made men better, . . . increased the regard for home, have strengthened the sacred ties of family, have made the community well-ordered, and their work has been a potent influence in the development of law and the establishment of government."

Hon. E. H. Conger, Minister to China, says: "I desire in this hour of deliverance to express what I know to be the universal sentiment of our diplomatic corps, our profound gratitude for inestimable help which the native Christians under you have rendered toward our preservation. Without your

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intelligent and successful planning and the uncomplaining execution of the Chinese, I believe our salvation would have been impossible. By your courteous consideration of me and your continued patience under most trying occasions, I have been most deeply touched, and for it I thank you most heartily. I hope and believe that in God's unerring plan your sacrifices and danger will be rich fruits in the material and spiritual welfare of people to whom you have so nobly devoted your lives and work."

Hon. Charles Denby, United States Minister to China from 1885 to 1898, says: "I unqualifiedly, and in the strongest language that tongue can utter, give to these men and women who are living and dying in China and the far East my full and unadulterated commendation. My doctrine is to tell, if I can, the simple truth about them, and when that is known, the caviling, the depreciation, the sneering which too often accompany comments on missionary work, will disappear, and they will stand before the world, as they ought to stand, as benefactors of the people among whom their lives are spent, and forerunners of the commerce of the world."

Contrast this with what Colonel Denby said in 1885, when he first came into contact with missionaries in China: "I am not particularly pro-missionary. These men and women are simply citizens to me as Minister, but as a man I cannot but admire and respect them. . . . These men and women are pious, honest, sincere, industrious, and trained for their work by much arduous study. Outside any religious question, these people are doing a great work of civilizing, educating, and taking care of helpless thousands. They are the forerunners of higher methods and higher morals. I do not address myself to churches, but as a man of the world talking to someone like himself. I think it is difficult to say too much good of the missionary work, even from the standpoint of the skeptic."

Minister Denby addressed a letter to Hon. Walter Q. Gresham, Secretary of State, on March 25, 1895, from which the following extracts are taken:

"*Sir:* During my recent short stay in the United States so many inquiries were made of me touching Christian missions in China, and the work that they are doing, that I have concluded to send to you my views of this important subject. I beg to premise that my official position causes me to be more guarded in expressing my views than I would otherwise be. I suppose the main, broad, and crucial question touching missionary work in China is, does it do good? This question may properly be divided into two. Let us look at them separately:

"First, does missionary work benefit the Chinese? I think no one can contro-

vert the patent fact that the Chinese are enormously benefited by the labors of the missionaries in their midst. Foreign hospitals are a great boon to the sick. China, before the advent of the missionary, did not know what surgery was. . . . In the matter of education the movement is immense. There are schools and colleges all over China, taught by the missionaries. I have been present often at the exhibitions given by these schools. They show progress in a great degree. The educated Chinaman who speaks English becomes a new man. . . . I leave out of this discussion the religious benefits conferred by converting Chinese to Christianity. . . . I can only say that converts to Christianity are numerous. There are many native Christian churches. The converts seem to be as devoted as people of any other race.

"In the second place, let us see whether and how far foreign countries are benefited by missionary work done in China. Missionaries are the pioneers of trade and commerce. Civilization, learning, and instruction breed new wants which commerce supplies. . . . Humanity has not devised any better, or even so good, engine of civilizing savage peoples as proselytism to Christianity. The history of the world attests this fact."

President James B. Angell, Minister to China from 1880 to 1881, states that "the immediate provocation of the Chinese officials seems to have been the reform movements of the Emperor in 1898 and the agressive policy of the European powers. The spirit which has animated the Chinese has been predominantly anti-foreign rather than anti-Christian. . . . As there are more missionaries in the interior than foreigners of any other class, more demonstrations have been made against them than other foreigners. My opinion is that missionary activities alone would not have involved foreign powers in any serious trouble with China."

Hon. Geo. F. Seward, former Consul General and subsequently Minister to China from 1876 to 1880, says of missionaries: "They are men of education and judgment. They depend upon spiritual weapons and good works. For every enemy a missionary makes he makes fifty friends. The one enemy may arouse in ignorant rabble to attack him. During my twenty years' stay in China I always congratulated myself on the fact that the missionaries were there. . . . The good done by the missionaries in the way of education, of medical relief, and of other charities, cannot be overestimated. If in China there were none other influences than missionary, the upbuilding of that great people would go forward securely. I have the profoundest admiration for the missionary as I have known him in China. He is a power for good and peace, not for evil."

From these statements of our leading representatives in China (and they could easily be multiplied) it will appear that those men whose long residence gives them opportunity to observe, and whose official responsibility makes their observations doubly sober, give the strongest possible approval to the work of missions in what is admittedly the most difficult of mission fields.

Hon. John W. Foster, formerly Secretary of State for the United States, and afterwards Consul to the Chinese Government, says: "There is, in my opinion, no reason why mission work in China should be relaxed on account of the recent troubles in that Empire. . . . After two visits to China, five and six ago, I said in public addresses before Christian audiences in various parts of the United States, that I regarded China as the most hopeful field for mission work in the world. The late disorders, the murders of missionaries, and the destruction of mission property have not changed my opinion. . . . The hope of this people (the Chinese) and its government is Christianity."

Hon. John W. Barrett, late Minister to Siam, says: "The King of Siam, who is admittedly one of the ablest statesmen in Asia, once said to me that the American missionaries had done more to advance the welfare of his country and people than any other foreign influence. From careful study of the scope of missionary labor, not only in Siam, but in China and Japan, during a period of nearly six years, I am convinced that the missionaries are doing a great and good work for the advancement of both the moral and material interests of these Asiatic lands. Let us therefore be fair in judging the missionaries."

On October 20, 1900, Mr. Barrett, writing for *The Outlook*, after frankly admitting that he went to the far East with a prejudice against missionaries, says: "I came away convinced beyond question that if the results of their efforts through long years could be carefully weighed in the balance of public opinion, a larger majority of our people would earnestly espouse the continuance of missionary effort everywhere in Asia. . . . It is well to note that nearly every minister and consul of the United States who has lived many years in Asia, and therefore has been brought in closest contact with the missionaries and their work, where he could study all the details of it, comes home more favorably disposed toward them than he was when he began his duties."

Lord Harris, Governor of Bombay, India, has said: "I do not think I can too prominently say that our gratitude to the American Marathin Mission has been piling up and piling up all the years of this century, . . . I take this

opportunity of conveying, on behalf of the Government of Bombay, our most grateful thanks for the assistance the people of the United States are rendering the Government in pushing forward the cause of education in India."

Sir Chas. U. Atchison, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, in a letter written in consequence of a statement in the book of an American naturalist, who had spent some time in India looking for wild animals, and not for native Christians, makes this strong statement: "Any one who writes that Indian officials as a class have no faith in the work of missionaries as a civilizing and Christianizing agency in India must be either ignorant of the facts or under the influence of a very blind prejudice. . . . Missionary teaching and Christian literature are leavening native opinion, especially among the Hindoos, in a way and to an extent quite startling to those who take a little personal trouble to investigate the facts.

Sir Richard Temple says of the native Christians of Southern India: "My conversation with them impressed me with their simple and absolute fidelity, their loyal feeling toward their European pastors, their resolute desire to transmit the faith unimpaired to their children. I never heard but one opinion from magistrates, civil officers, and independent observers; namely this, that these people are well behaved, law-abiding, free from crime, temperate, harmless. That they never cause scandals to arise, never apostatize, never compromise themselves with idolatrous practices, and yet never engage in feuds or even disputes with their heathen neighbors. As for their inner life—let any one who is acquainted with the practical ethics of Hindooism, not as gathered from sacred writings and accessible only to the learned, but as displayed in the conduct of public worship and the effect of private example—contrast this with the pure belief and the virtuous instruction under which they now live. We will then find it impossible to doubt the enormous effects, morally and spiritually, produced by Christianity on their minds and hearts. The conduct of the native Christians is good, and worthy of the faith which they profess."

Sir Bartte Frere, formerly Governor of Bombay, said in a lecture delivered in London: "I speak simply as to matters of experience and observation, and not of opinion; just as a Roman prefect might have reported to Trojan or the Antonine; and I assure you that, whatever you may be told to the contrary, the teaching of Christianity among the millions of Hindoos and Mohammedans in India is effecting changes, moral, social, and political, which for extent and rapidity of effect are far more extraordinary than anything which you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe."

Sir Charles Elliott, Governor of Bengal, ruling seventy millions of people in India, said in London: "I make bold to say if missions did not exist it would be our duty to invent them."

An English Blue Book (which is the official report of Parliament) contains these strong words: "The Government of India cannot but acknowledge the great obligation under which it is laid by the benevolent work of these six hundred missionaries whose blameless example and self-denying labors are infusing new vigor into the stereotyped life of the great population placed under English rule, and are preparing them to be in every way better men and better citizens of the great empire in which they live."

The testimony of intelligent Hindoos, who, while yet heathens, have seen the influence of Christianity as it has been exerted in India, corroborates that of the English statesmen cited above, as may be seen from the following: Keshub Chunder Sen, the founder of the Bramo-Somaj, a Hindoo society, the organization of which Prof. Max Muller declared to be one of the most momentous movements of the century, says: "It is Christ who rules British India, and not the British Government."

Prince Travancore, of India, said: "Of one thing I am convinced—do what we will, oppose it as we may, it is the Christian's Bible which sooner or later will regenerate this land. Marvelous has been the effect of Christianity in the moral moulding and leavening of Europe. I am not a Christian; I do not accept the cardinal tenets of Christianity as they concern man in the next world; but I accept the Christian ethics in their entirety; I have the highest admiration for them."

An old Hindoo gentleman said to Doctor Penticost a few years ago, when that gentleman was visiting India: "I shall never be a Christian, but shall die a Hindoo; but I have no doubt my grandchildren will all become Christians."

The Hindoo, a leading Hindoo paper, published in South India, said: "We recently approved the statement of a Bombay paper, that the social eminence which Parsees so deservedly enjoy at the present moment was due to these two causes: that their women are well educated, and they are bound by no restrictions of caste. These two advantages make themselves felt among our native Christian brethren, and it is probable they will soon be the Parsees of Southern India. They will furnish the most distinguished public servants, barristers, merchants, and citizens among the various classes of the native community."

Prof. W. M. Ramsay, of Aberdeen University, who has spent twelve years in archeological studies in Turkey, says: "Beginning with a prejudice against their (missionaries') work, I was driven by the force of facts and experience to the opinion that the mission has been the strongest as well as the most beneficent influence in causing the movement toward civilization which has been perceptible among all the people of Turkey." He speaks of "the great educational organization which the American missionaries have built up in Turkey with admirable foresight and skill."

Commander Benjamin F. Tilley, first Governor of American Samoa, says: "Nearly every inhabitant of Manna is a professing Christian, and all the hillsides resound morning and evening with hymns of praise to God. While many people scoff at the work of the missionaries, I say without hesitation that they have done a wonderful and noble work among the natives of the South Seas, and through God's help have practically converted the whole of the Samoans."

Hon. William T. Harris, United States Commissioner of Education, says: "In the district of Alaska, whose educational system is under the charge of the Bureau of Education, we find the mission stations the only effective centers for any efforts looking to the education of the natives and their assimilation with our own."

Rear Admiral George E. Bellknap, United States Navy, says: "I assert it to be a fact beyond contradiction, that there is not a ruler, official, merchant, or any other person, from emperors, viceroys, governors, judges, generals, counselors, ministers, admirals, and others down to the lowest coolies in China and Japan, Siam and Korea, who in their association or dealings with their fellow men in that quarter of the globe, are not indebted every day of their lives to work and achievements of the American missionaries."

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20.)

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Gost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i. 8.)

"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. xi. 9.)